

REMARKS

Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing remarks. Claims 1-45 are pending, with claims 1, 19, 20, 25, 29, 34, and 39 being independent. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 33, 34, and 39 have been amended. Claims 40-45 have been added. No new matter is added.

Personal Interview

Applicant would like to thank Examiner Gold for the courtesy extended to Applicant's representative during the telephone interview conducted on September 27, 2004. This Reply reflects the substance of the interview.

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9-15, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25-27, 29-31, 33, 34, 36, and 37 have been rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,691,156 to Drummond et al., referenced hereinafter as Drummond. This rejection is obviated by amendments to the claims.

As amended, independent claim 1 now recites "modifying the electronic data with endorsement information."¹ Drummond fails to describe or suggest such features.

As indicated by the title, Drummond is directed to a spam filtering system.² In particular, Drummond blocks email messages from senders that do not appear in a user's address book.³ As such, Drummond merely allows a message meeting the address book criteria to be processed as an electronic mail message.⁴ Merely processing an electronic mail message does not modify the electronic data with endorsement information. Because Drummond does not modify the electronic data with endorsement information, Drummond does not meet the amended limitation recited in claim 1.

Because Drummond fails to disclose or suggest modifying the electronic data with endorsement information, as recited by claim 1, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, and claims 1-18 and 40-45 depending therefrom.

¹ Examples of support for the amendments are discussed with respect to Figs. 8, 9A, and 9B.

² Method for Restricting Delivery of Unsolicited Email.

³ See Fig. 3 (step 310).

⁴ See Fig. 3 (steps 322 and 324 showing an email being "released").

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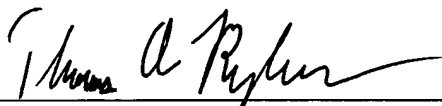
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Claims 19-39 recite limitations that are similar to those discussed above for the purpose of the rejection raised with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of independent claims 19, 20, 25, 29, 34, and 39 and claims 21-24, 26-28, 30-33, and 35-39, which depend from their respective independent claims.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 9/29/2004



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